

AGNES SANFORD

July 22, 2008 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

Agnes White Sanford (1897-1982) was an Episcopalian faith healer who has had a great influence within the charismatic movement, the contemplative prayer movement, and the recovered memory movement. For example, Richard Foster recommends Sanford, saying, "I have discovered her to be an extremely wise and skillful counselor in these matters. Her book *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit* is an excellent resource" (*Celebration of Discipline*, 1978, footnote 1, p. 136). Foster includes an entire chapter by Sanford in his book *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*.

Her widely read books were published in the following order: *The Healing Light* (1947), *Behold Your God* (1959), *Healing Gifts of the Spirit* (1966), *Lost Shepherd* (1971), *Sealed Orders* (1972), *Healing Power of the Bible* (1976), *The Healing Touch of God* (1983).

In her autobiography she claimed that God had given her "sealed orders" to be "an explorer and a way-shower along the paths of healing and miracles."

SANFORD'S DOWNWARD SPIRAL BEGINNING IN CHILDHOOD

She grew up in China, the daughter of fundamentalist Presbyterian missionaries, and as a child she had several experiences that prepared her for the reception of very radical and unscriptural doctrines and practices.

The first experience was at age 11 when she decided that her parents were wrong to teach that the age of apostolic miracles was past. She thought that Christians today should do the same miracles that Jesus did (*Sealed Orders*, pp. 13, 26). She was dissatisfied with simply living by faith and accepting what God gives us in answer to prayer on the basis of His sovereign will. She refused to understand that though the apostolic miracles have ceased because their purpose has ceased (2 Cor. 12:12), this is not to say that God no longer does miracles or that we don't believe in God's miracle-working power. While the gift of healing is not operative today as it was in the days of the apostles, God still heals in accordance with James 5. But He has not promised *always* to heal and He did not always heal even in the days of the apostles (e.g., 2 Cor. 12:7-10; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20).

The next experience involved the rejection of biblical discernment and reproof. This occurred when the modernist Harry Emerson Fosdick visited China and her family heard him speak. Afterwards her parents criticized Fosdick's theology at the dinner table, and she brazenly rejected what they were doing.

"Dr. Fosdick preached on Christian love, but he was not sound because he did not mention the Blood of the Lamb in about every third sentence. This went on and on until finally, I burst into tears and left the table, to the utter consternation of my parents, for such a thing I never did" (pp. 30, 31).

She grossly mischaracterized this situation. Her parents were not criticizing some very minor error in a preacher. In reality, Fosdick denied practically every doctrine of the Christian faith, including Christ's deity, virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, and bodily resurrection. As for the Blood Christ, Fosdick *NEVER* mentioned it except to ridicule it! In 1945 Fosdick wrote the following to an individual who inquired about his beliefs: "Of course I do not believe in the virgin birth or in that old-fashioned substitutionary doctrine of the atonement, and I know of no intelligent person who does" (quoted in Chester Tulga, *The Ethics of Modernism*, 1981, p. 40).

Sanford was rebelling against her parents and the clear teaching of the Bible. She was rejecting the very thing that protects us from falling into error, and that is testing everything carefully by God's Word. She

said that though her parents “were completely Christ-centered and Bible-centered, believing every word of Holy Writ from cover to cover,” something was wrong with their kind of Christianity (p. 31). In fact, the problem was with Sanford and not with her parents.

Another important event was when she determined that she would not worry about “snakes” and would pursue whatever path she chose.

“I made a decision in those early days from which I have never wavered. I would not go all of my life in the bondage of treading only a known path lest I step upon a snake. I would go through untrodden country toward the goal of my choice, whether or not I trod upon a snake” (*Sealed Orders*, p. 32).

This was a very significant decision that was contrary to the Bible. It is fine to be willing to go in new paths if it is God’s will and it is not contrary to Scripture, but we are warned repeatedly to beware of false teachers, to try the spirits, to be sober and vigilant against demonic deception. There is plenty to be afraid of and to beware of in the Christian life, and we are not free to go where we please and presume that God will protect us.

Another significant experience involved praying to Buddha. The rebellious little girl actually snuck off and prayed to an idol.

“One day I entered the temple alone. No monks were there, droning their ‘O-me-to-fu’ with half-shut eyes and vacant faces. ... And a thought came to me--What if these idols had some power after all? How could I know whether my parents knew the truth about them? What would happen if I myself were to worship the great Buddha? ... I folded my hands together, bowed before the serene gilded idol, who apparently paid me no attention whatsoever, and murmured ‘O-me-to-fu’ as the monks did.

“Nothing happened. Or did it? For gradually there came to be within me another voice, sneering, despising, scorning me”

“... there gradually developed in my mind a certain cynicism concerning piosity, a cynicism which lasts to this day” (pp. 15, 26).

This is a frightful thing. She claims that she was a believer in Jesus Christ from her earliest memories, but a true believer does not pray to idols. She was communing with devils, and doubtless this experience tainted her mind and spirit. Later she admitted that she might have been demonized at that point, and as an adult she thought that perhaps demons were cast out of her through prayer (*Sealed Orders*, p. 110). But she did not renounce the views that she developed while under demonic influence, views that eventually led her to the most radical fringe of charismatic heresy and beyond.

The next significant experience was a series of mystical insights during her teens whereby she saw and felt herself to be one with the universe. This is a common experience of Catholic contemplatives, but it is unscriptural and doubtless occultic.

In the first of these she “entered into a state of indescribable dreamy bliss wherein I was one with the tall crisp grass, and with the tiny creatures that lived within it, and with the high blue sky...” (*Sealed Orders*, p. 33). In the second experience she “entered into a state of high ecstasy” and sensed God “flowing into me from bamboo and from rock, from ferns and moss and tiny orchids hiding in the grass” (p. 33). The third experience occurred while she was lying on a ship’s deck at night. “I was one with the stars--I was one with the universe. I felt in me the life of the strange creatures within the sea and beneath the waves and flying above the waves” (p. 40).

The Bible says that “*in him we live and move and have our being*” (Acts 17:28) and “*by him all things consist*” (Col. 1:17), but it nowhere says that God is *in* all things. He created all things; He is aware of all things; He is in ultimate control of all things; He cares and provides for all things; there is nowhere we can flee from His Spirit (Psa. 139:7); but He is not *IN* all things. The believer sees the glory of God in the creation (Rom. 1:20), but God does not flow into us from the creation nor is God in the creation itself.

That is the heresy of panentheism.

Sanford was learning to trust her mystical experiences regardless of whether they lined up with Scripture.

Another important event was a course she took in psychology.

“In the very practical course in psychology, I learned the basis of those methods of study which to this day I use” (*Sealed Orders*, p. 42).

She is not even talking about “Christian” psychology; she is referring to secular psychology, and there is nothing godly about it. It is permeated with false theories from top to bottom. It does not begin with the correct understanding of man as a creation of God that has sinned against the Creator and become estranged, a sinner whose heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9), a sinner destined either to heaven or hell depending on what he does with Jesus Christ. How, then, can psychology form the basis for any legitimate Christian ministry?

The fact is the Sanford’s doctrine was heavily influenced by Jungian psychology, which is deeply occultic. Her son, Jack (d. 2005), was an influential Jungian psychologist.

Jung explored Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, I Ching, astrology, Spiritualism, Gnosticism, alchemy, dream interpretation, mandala symbolism, Theosophy, Greek Mythology, and more. He communicated with spirits all his life. As a child he felt that he had two personalities, one was himself the schoolboy and the other was a man from the 18th century. This other personality, named *Philemon*, had a life of its own and talked with Jung. Obviously it was a familiar spirit. When Jung had a breakdown following his separation from Sigmund Freud and was nearly suicidal he renewed communication with this spirit and Philemon became his guide. Jung said, “Philemon represented a force which was not myself. ... It was he who taught me psychic objectivity” (James Sundquist, *A Review of the Purpose Driven Life*).

Jung openly rejected Christ. He said:

“Lord Jesus never became quite real for me, never quite acceptable, never quite lovable, for again and again I would think of his underground counterpart [referring to a reoccurring immoral dream he had]. ... Lord Jesus seemed to me in some ways a god of death. ... Secretly, his love and kindness, which I always heard praised, appeared doubtful to me” (Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, p. 13).

There are other things that Jung said in relation to Christ that are even more abominable but I do not want to quote them. It is enough to say that he was a demonically-deceived blasphemer and Christ rejecter of the highest order.

Agnes Sanford borrowed dream analysis from Jung. This is a part of “depth psychology” which seeks to understand the hidden or deeper parts of human experience. Jung believed that dreams reflect both the personal and “collective” unconscious and that they contain revelations as well as fantasies. (For more about Jung see *The New Age Tower of Babel*, available from Way of Life Literature.)

The next significant event in Sanford’s downward spiral was the healing of her child’s infected ears by an Episcopal priest named Hollis Colwell. He laid his hands on the child’s ears and asked Jesus to heal him. Then he said, “Thank You, Lord, for I believe that You are doing this, and I see these ears well as You made them to be” (*Sealed Orders*, p. 108).

We believe in healing according to James 5 and we have experienced such healing, but the healing described by Sanford was by means of charismatic positive confession, and it is not Scriptural. Further, the child continued to have problems with its ears, so it was a strange kind of “healing”!

This experience eventually broke down Sanford's barriers to the ministry of Episcopalian charismaticism, which is deeply heretical. She says that at first she was hesitant and perplexed. "I did not know what queer business I might be getting into." She should have listened to those mental warnings.

The next event in Sanford's life that related to her journey away from Scripture was an emotional healing that she experienced through the same Episcopal priest. Through the laying on of hands, visualization, and positive confession he "healed" her of depression (though she struggled with depression for a long time thereafter!). He then taught her to practice this on others. She was to picture in her mind what she wanted and thank God that it was going to happen.

The next step on the downward path was delving into New Thought and the occult. She attended séances and studied Christian Science. She said that she couldn't understand the latter very well, but she does not "scorn Christian Scientists" and "am grateful to them" for recovering the doctrine of healing (*Sealed Orders*, p. 113).

She was deeply impressed with Emmet Fox's *The Sermon on the Mount*, saying that "it thrilled my soul" (p. 113). It teaches the heresy that there is a "spiritual body" within the physical body, and that the physical body can be healed by addressing the spiritual body.

"Therefore when I prayed for healing, I could accept the healing as already accomplished in the spiritual body, and so could know that it would be transferred to the physical body. ... One time, for instance, I went forth from the dining room to the cloister in an agitated frame of mind, and banged the heavy door shut on my finger. ... I said, 'I have a spiritual body, and in the spiritual body this finger is perfect.' Immediately there appeared a tiny hold in the base of the fingernail and all the black blood oozed out, and from that time forth the finger did not hurt at all" (*Sealed Orders*, p. 115).

There is not a hint of such a doctrine in the Bible.

Emmet Fox was a New Thought teacher who believed that God is all and man is God. He taught about a "mystic mind power" that "can teach you all things that you need to know." He promised: "It is your right and your privilege to make your contact with this Power, and to allow it to work through your body, mind, and estate, so that you need no longer grovel upon the ground amid limitations and difficulties, but can soar up on wings like an eagle to the realm of dominion and joy" (*Find and Use Your Inner Power*).

The next step in Sanford's journey toward heresy was meeting a female healer who instructed her that she had to "visualize her patients well or they would not be healed. "... unless you can learn to see them well, you only fasten the sickness upon them" (*Sealed Orders*, p. 164). This she learned how to do.

From there she went deeper and deeper into error, including charismatic tongues, radical ecumenism with Roman Catholics, Orthodox, and you-name-it, and sacramentalism.

SANFORD'S MISUSE OF SCRIPTURE

Sanford claims that God gave her a great illumination of the Scripture, but in fact she misused it on every hand.

I did not find one instance in her book *The Healing Light* in which she used Scripture properly. In every case she twisted it out of context and forced a strange meaning on it.

For example, she quoted Ephesians 5:8, "walk as children of light," but she interpreted this to mean that believers are "to live as if they were made of a living, moving energy like light" (*The Healing Light*, p. 17).

Elsewhere she said that “we learn to cure our diseased bodies by seeing, in our own flesh, God” (p. 61). As evidence for this statement she quoted Job 19:26, “in my flesh shall I see God,” but Job was not talking about this present life; he was talking about the resurrection! There is not a hint in the Bible that Job cured himself through visualizing prayer and positive confession.

SANFORD’S CONFUSION ABOUT SALVATION

Sanford was confused about salvation. At times she used biblical terminology about salvation, but other times she described salvation in heretical terms.

On one hand she claimed that she was saved when she put her faith in Christ as a nine-year-old girl.

“I, too, knew Jesus. I had been converted while on furlough at the age of nine. Though remembering nothing of the public school to which I had presumably been subjected, I did remember very well the gentle Presbyterian minister who had made sure of my salvation and who had given me the right hand of fellowship and received one into the Southern Presbyterian church” (*Sealed Orders*, p. 12).

But she also claimed that she came to know God through a mystical experience by a lake.

“There beside the dancing waters of the lake I prayed that God’s life would enter into me through the sunlight. ... I was filled with such unbearable bliss that I thought, ‘If this doesn’t stop, I’ll die. But I don’t want it to stop, I don’t want it to stop.’ ... It passed. I was myself again, yet never again quiet the same. From this time forth I knew God” (*Sealed Orders*, p. 147).

Further, she claimed that she received Jesus through sacraments and mysticism.

“My own most effective way of receiving Christ is at the communion service, for I have learned to receive Him through the sacraments of the church as well as through my own meditation. In other words, I have learned to combine the sacramental with the meditative approach” (*The Healing Light*, p. 167).

SANFORD’S HERESIES

1. She believed that healing is guaranteed if performed properly, just as a light bulb will come on when a lamp is in working order and connected to electricity. If healing doesn’t come, it is because there is something wrong with the technique.

“How long should we continue praying for healing? Until the healing is accomplished” (*The Healing Light*, p. 14).

“Let us understand then that if our experiment [of prayer] fails, it is not due to a lack in God, but to a natural and understandable lack in ourselves. ... the lack of success in healing is not due to God’s will for us but to our failure to live near enough to God so that He can accomplish perfection in our spirits and bodies” (*The Healing Light*, pp. 8, 10).

Sanford even claimed that believers could “live above death and above the illness and pain that lead to death” (*The Healing Light*, p. 72).

As for the case of Paul’s thorn in the flesh in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Sanford, though a very convoluted pattern of thought, claimed that this doesn’t actually mean that God didn’t want to heal Paul. Instead, it means that God would heal him a little at a time and that since he was old by then, he wasn’t completely healed before death took him (*The Healing Light*, pp. 35-38). In reply to this we would say, first of all, that the idea that Paul was old when the event described in 2 Corinthians 12 occurred is presumptuous, because the Bible doesn’t say how old he was. Second, Paul plainly testifies that God told him that it was NOT HIS WILL to remove the thorn in the flesh, so Paul concluded that it was good for him to glory in and take pleasure in “infirmities.” The same Greek word translated “infirmities” in 2 Corinthians 12: 9-10

is elsewhere translated “sickness” (John 11:4) and disease (Acts 28:9). No amount of scripture twisting can do away with the effect of this passage. It refutes the doctrine that healing is always God’s will.

2. She rejected the idea that it is ever God’s will for us to be sick, mischaracterizing “that” God as a bully.

“If we think of God as a heavenly stage manager, jerking us about like puppets upon strings, this is a natural and indeed an inevitable conclusion. God can do whatever He likes. We have asked him to make us well. He has not done so. Well, then, He must like us to be sick” (p. 10).

She claims that it is always the will of Christ to heal children that are brought to Him by their parents (p. 11).

3. She promoted visualization and positive confession as the key to healing success.

She claimed that negative thoughts produce a negative reality, whereas positive thoughts produce a positive reality.

“We must re-educate the subconscious mind, replacing every thought of fear with a thought of faith, every thought of illness with a thought of health, every thought of death with a thought of life. ... Therefore if we find ourselves thinking, ‘One of my headaches is coming on,’ we correct that thought. ‘Whose headaches?’ we say, ‘God’s light shines within me and God doesn’t have headaches’” (pp. 33, 34).

Her technique for healing required visualizing the desired result in one’s mind and then affirming it by thanking God that it is going to happen. This is positive confession.

“From that time forth I set myself to learn to ‘see them well.’ This required mental training. I would exercise my visual faculty, that part of the creative imagination that is most like God. I would create in my mind a definite and detailed picture of each person for whom I prayed, seeing the whole body radiant and free and well, with light in the eyes and color in the cheeks and a swinging rhythm in the walk. I would raise him in my mind from a hospital bed and see him walking, running, leaping. By an act of will I would hold this picture in my mind until it outshone the picture last suggested to me by my eyes or by a letter” (pp. 142, 143).

“... we must never question it, let we stop the work that He is doing through us. ... we must keep on giving thanks that this is so” (pp. 52, 53).

“And we remember that ‘Amen’ means ‘So be it,’ and is therefore a command sent forth in the name of Christ” (p. 52).

If she spilled hot oil on her hand in the kitchen, she confessed: “I’m boss inside of me. And what I say goes. I say that my skin shall not be affected by that boiling fat, and that’s all there is to it. I see my skin well, perfect and whole, and I say it’s to be so” (*The Healing Light*, p. 65).

When her children misbehaved she would “in my mind the picture of the child as he was at his best” and “make in my mind the image of a child at peace and project it into reality by the word of faith” (pp. 54, 55).

She described an occasion when she was on an elevator and a woman entered who was tired and discouraged. She said that she thought in her mind: “I bless you in the name of the Lord. I see you as a child of God, strong and refreshed and joyful, for through my prayers His strength is entering into you” (p. 57).

When she found a neighbor near death because of heart failure she did the following: “As soon as my hands were firmly upon his heart, I felt quiet, serene, in control. ... I talked informally to the heart, assuring it quietly that the power of God was at this moment re-creating it and that it need labor no longer. Finally, I pictured the heart perfect, blessing it continually in the name of the Lord and giving thanks that it was being re-created in perfection” (*The Healing Light*, p. 87).

She recommends the same thing for the healing of nations:

"First we make in our minds a picture of the nation as we would have her be, so that she may best further the establishment of peace. We see an aggressor nation, for example, shrinking back in her borders and sending out into the world little golden arrows of trade and commerce and financial cooperation. We do this in the same way that we see a sick body well, making the picture clear, concrete, vivid and simple. It is a child-like method, the method of happy visioning" (p. 164).

She called this "the prayer of faith" and "love-power."

If this were a true biblical practice, believers could bring in the kingdom of God through the power of visualization, but it is not a true practice and all of the power visualizing they want to do will not change the foundational character of this world one iota. The world system will only be changed when Christ returns in glory and not a moment before. We are not God. We don't have the power to create reality with our minds!

4. She taught that God's "energy" can be channeled by the laying on of hands.

She said that the universe is made up of "the creative energy of God" and that the individual can connect with this energy and channel it to others by the laying on of hands.

"The same principle is true of the creative energy of God. The whole universe is full of it, but only the amount of it that flows through our own beings will work for us" (*The Healing Light*, p. 1).

"Oh, take your hands away!" cried the little girl. "It's hot."

"That's God's power working in your knee, Sally," I replied. "It's like electricity working in your lamp. I guess it has to be hot, so as to make the knee come back to life. So you just stand it now for a few minutes, while I tell you about Peter Rabbit." By the time the erring Peter had returned home without his shoes and his new red jacket and had been put to bed with castor oil, the pulsation of energy in my hands had died away. ...

"How do you turn on God's electricity in your hands?" she asked me at my next visit

Once I was called to see a baby girl ill with pneumonia. I knelt beside her crib in silence, laid one hand upon the small, congested chest and slipped the other one beneath her back, and asked God to come into her. Soon the waxy frame of the baby was filled with a visible inrushing of new life. Even the hands and feet vibrated, as if an electric current were entering into her (*The Healing Light*, pp. 19, 20).

There is nothing like the flow of electricity and heat and pulsations through the laying of hands in Scripture, but it is common to the world of the occult. It lies at the heart of Chinese *chi* and Hindu *prana*.

5. She taught that unbelievers can exercise these powers as effectively as believers.

The occultic nature of Sanford's practice is evident in that unbelievers can exercise them effectively.

"One does not need to be a saint or a scientist in order to do this" (*The Healing Light* p. 21).

She describes a wounded soldier she met in a hospital. Though he admitted that he didn't know God, she got him to admit that he believed in "something" and then taught him to do the following:

"Ask that Something to come into you. Just say, 'Whoever you are or whatever you are, come into me now and help nature in my body to mend this bone, and do it quick. Thanks, I believe you're doing it.' Then make a picture in your mind of the leg well. Shut your eyes and see it that way. See the bone all built in and the flesh strong and perfect around it. And play like you see a kind of light shining in it--a sort of a blue light, like one of these neon signs, shining and burning and flowing all up and down the leg. ... that's the way you make it happen. No matter what you want to make, you first have to see it in your mind ... Then after you see the leg well, give a pep talk to all the healing forces of your body. Say, 'Look here, I'm boss inside of me and what I say goes. Now get busy and mend that leg'" (*The Healing Light*, pp. 22, 23).

She instructed an unbelieving mother who had a problem child:

"Make the picture of the child as you want her to be, and say, 'My love brought this child into the world, and through my own mother-love I re-create her after this image!'" (p. 56).

This is not biblical Christianity; it is pagan occultism.

6. She taught that silent meditation is an essential part of the prayer for healing.

"The first step in seeking to produce results by any power is to contact that power. The first step then in seeking help from God is to contact God. 'Be still and know that I am God.' Let us then lay aside our worries and cares, quiet our minds and concentrate upon the reality of God. ... quiet the mind and concentrate the spiritual energies on God. Let us sit comfortably with the head at rest and the hands folded in the lap. ... He will notice as he relaxes that even his breathing is altered, becoming slow, thin and light as if to leave room for the Spirit of God within. ... So we speak gently and soothingly to the nerves all the way up the body and in the head. And in the same quiet way we bid our conscious minds be still" (pp. 7, 24, 25).

This is similar to the quieting meditation methods that Yogis and Zen Buddhists use to enter into transcendental states, bodily relaxation, controlled breathing, visualizing the quieting of the body. She quotes Psalm 46:10, but the psalmist is not describing silent meditation; he is simply exhorting us to trust in God.

She taught that in this meditative state God would enter one's being. This sounds very much like a demonic visitation.

"We may be conscious of an inrushing current of energy, like electricity. ... But before we have learned to perceive these physical sensations, we will be conscious of His entering into us upon the footsteps of peace. We will know by the stirrings of hope within our minds that He is there" (pp. 27).

The Bible nowhere teaches the believer to expect God to enter him in this (or any other) fashion through prayer.

7. She was a female preacher.

After she began her healing ministry she started preaching to mixed congregations of men and women, and after the publication of *The Healing Light* she traveled widely on preaching engagements. She admits that her husband didn't like it at first.

"My husband, being a good man and a faithful priest, let me go on these occasional missions or trips, feeling no doubt that it was his duty and mine. But he did not like it. ... But the larger call drove me on, prodded me on, forced me on. For Christian people must know that Jesus lives and heals today--they must!" (*Sealed Orders*, p. 156).

She felt compelled to preach in spite of her husband's resistance, but it was a compulsion that was contrary to God's Word. First, the Bible forbids the woman to teach or to usurp authority over the man (1 Timothy 2:12). Further, the Bible commands the wife to submit to her husband (Eph. 5:22). The only exception is if the husband is commanding her to do something clearly contrary to God's Word, and in that case God's Word is the higher law. But in Sanford's case, her action was not supported by Scripture and she should have submitted to her husband's will.

But Sanford had long before learned to disregard the Bible and anything else for her inner compulsions and mystical experiences.

8. She seemed to be a universalist, believing that all men are children of God.

When she met a Jewish soldier in a hospital she said: "I imagined Jesus there beside me and talked to Him. 'Here you are and HERE'S YOUR CHILD,' I said inwardly. 'Please lay your own hands on him and do whatever you want to do through me'" (p. 135).

Not once in her book *The Healing Light*, which is her guide to performing miracles and transforming the world, does she say that those without personal faith in Christ are lost and hell bound or give any instructions about trying to lead them to salvation.

9. She was a founder of the dangerous field of healing of memories.

Sanford's work *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit* (1966) was foundational to this movement. She taught that the recovery of hidden memories of past events hold the key to emotional suffering and psychological problems in the present.

"Something is troubling the deep mind. There is no question about it. Some old unpleasant memory is knocking on the doors of the consciousness. Some need of the soul is arising as a dark shadow that will overwhelm us if we do not let it out into the light of understanding" (*The Healing Gifts*, p. 108).

Sanford taught that the individual should ask Jesus to go back through all of the stages of his or her life and heal everything, even to birth and beyond.

"Follow the soul of this Your child all the way back to the hour of birth and heal the soul even of pain and the fear of being born into this darksome world. ... And if even before birth the soul was shadowed by this human life and was darkened by the fears or sorrows of the human parents, then I pray that even those memories or impressions may be healed, so that this one may be restored to Your original pattern, the soul as free and as clean as though nothing had ever dimmed its shining" (*The Healing Gifts*, pp. 122, 123).

Of course there is not a hint of such a thing in Scripture. It has no biblical authority whatsoever. "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29).

Through the practice of recovered memories countless lives have been ruined, families torn apart, fathers and mothers and grandparents and other family members wrongly condemned. Some have been gone to prison on the basis of "recovered memories" that have turned out to be completely bogus. Some victims of "recovered memory" delusions have committed suicide.

For more on this see the PsychoHeresy Awareness Ministries -- <http://www.psychoheresy-aware.org/inner82.html>.

10. She didn't care about doctrine, believing that all professing Christians should get along regardless of what they believe.

She mentions Roman Catholic nuns and the Mass in a positive manner (*The Healing Light*, pp. 127, 137). She describes a Catholic soldier she met in an army hospital. When she learned that he was Catholic, she didn't explain the true gospel to him. Instead, she told him: "I'll ask my friends the Sisters to pray for you every morning at the Mass. And that Life will go from the Mass right through their prayers into your spine. You'll see!" (p. 127). The Mass is an unscriptural ritual whereby the Catholic priest supposedly turns a wafer into the very body of Jesus Christ. The typical Roman Catholic is trusting his baptism and works and the sacraments of the church for his salvation. It is criminal not to warn them of Rome's false gospel and to point them to the truth.

11. She was a sacramentalist.

She joined the Episcopalian Church and learned to confess her sins to a priest and participate in the Eucharist. She believed that she was thereby receiving Christ.

"My own most effective way of receiving Christ is at the communion service, for I have learned to receive Him through the sacraments of the church as well as through my own meditation. In other words, I have learned to combine the sacramental with the meditative approach" (*The Healing Light*, p. 167).

"So I made a first confession, very uncomfortably, with the shades of my Scotch Presbyterian ancestors peering around the corners. ... Whereupon the priest made one statement and only one. He said, 'Although so few people know it, the church through Jesus Christ really does have the power and authority to forgive sins. Therefore I am sure that these your sins will be forgiven.' ... I had hardly gone out of the place before I was flooded from head to foot with the most overwhelming vibrations. I felt a high ecstasy of spirit such as I had felt before when very spiritual people had prayed for me. I felt a deep inner burning which I had felt when receiving a 'healing treatment' from someone who had the faith to set free the healing power of God in prayer. I knew by the inner warmth and tingling that my nerves and glands were being healed of their overstrain and weakness" (pp. 119, 120).

Observe how that she was convinced that this was a legitimate practice by the mystical experience. This is what she followed from her childhood. Though she thought of herself as a Bible believer, in reality she was a mystic who pursued truth beyond the pages of Scripture through experience. How many souls have been led astray by a mere fleeting feeling!

12. She taught that a new age is being born through the power of visualization and positive confession.

"A certain engineer was once surveying in a field when a bull charged his party with lowered head and thundering hoofs. There was no tree to climb. There was no fence to jump. So the engineer stood his ground, filled his mind with the love of God and projected it to the bull. 'I am God's man and you are God's bull,' he thought in silence. 'God made both of us, and in the name of Jesus Christ I say that there is nothing but loving-kindness between us.' The bull stopped abruptly. ...

"If an armed burglar broke into your house with intent to kill,' the old question goes, 'what would you do? Fight him, or lie still and let him kill your wife or child?' Silly old question. One would do neither. One would project into the burglar's mind the love of God, by seeing him as a child of God and asking God to bless him. And if one were strong enough in faith and love, the burglar's mind would change. He would leave the family unharmed and go away. ... A new age is being born. The day has come when love-power, at the command of ministers and surveyors and children and everyone, is sufficient to change hearts here and there in the world about them. This is the beginning of a new order. ... as more and more of us see God, live in harmony with Him and show forth His perfection in our bodies, minds and spirits, the 'normal' processes of growth, maturity, old age and death will be altered" (pp. 49, 72).

Agnes Sanford is dead, but her influence lives on in the charismatic movement, the contemplative movement, and the recovered memory movement.

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